



December 2013

The **Sta. Rita Hills AVA** is an American Viticulture Area located in Santa Barbara County, California.

Part of California, Central Coast AVA, Santa Ynez Valley AVA

Sta. Rita Hills AVA

- 2001 name established as Santa Rita Hills
- 2005 name amended to Sta. Rita Hills

History

- 1787 The Mission grape, the Heritage grape of California, planted by the Franciscans as they established La Purisima Concepción at the edge of the AVA
- 1845 Santa Rita was distinguished as a recognized political and geographical region from Spanish governor Pio Pico .
- 1971 The Sanford and Benedict Vineyard was the first wine grape vineyard established in the area
- 1976 Sanford and Benedict released their first vintage to much critical acclaim
- 2001 The region received AVA designation
- 2013 There are 2877 acres planted to wine grapes in the Sta. Rita Hills

Climate

- U.C. Davis Region One growing area
- Cool Climate - situated in an east west maritime throat –the most clearly delineated east / west transverse range from Alaska to Chile on the Pacific Coast making it uniquely susceptible to the ocean's cooling influence

Soils

The soils of the Santa Rita Hills are broken down from an array of geological parent material. The most common soil types within the boundaries are sandy loams, loams, silt loams and clay loams based on large percentages of dune sand, marine deposit, recent alluvium, riverwash and terrace deposits.

Geography

Total area: 30,720 square acres

Located in Santa Barbara County, Sta. Rita Hills is part of the larger Santa Ynez Valley AVA, located between the towns of Lompoc and Buellton with the Purisima Hills on the north and the Santa Rosa Hills on the South. The wine region is exposed to fog and coastal breezes from the nearby Pacific Ocean. The hills run east to west, which allows cool ocean breezes to enter the valley created by the hills and create a cool micro-climate. When combined with the rocky nature of the area, the Santa Rita Hills area is well-suited for the growing of Pinot Noir grapes, which tend to do well in cool climates with rocky soil. This unique transverse range has been recognized viticulturally and enologically for producing world class, cool climate wine grape varieties such as Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

Vineyards

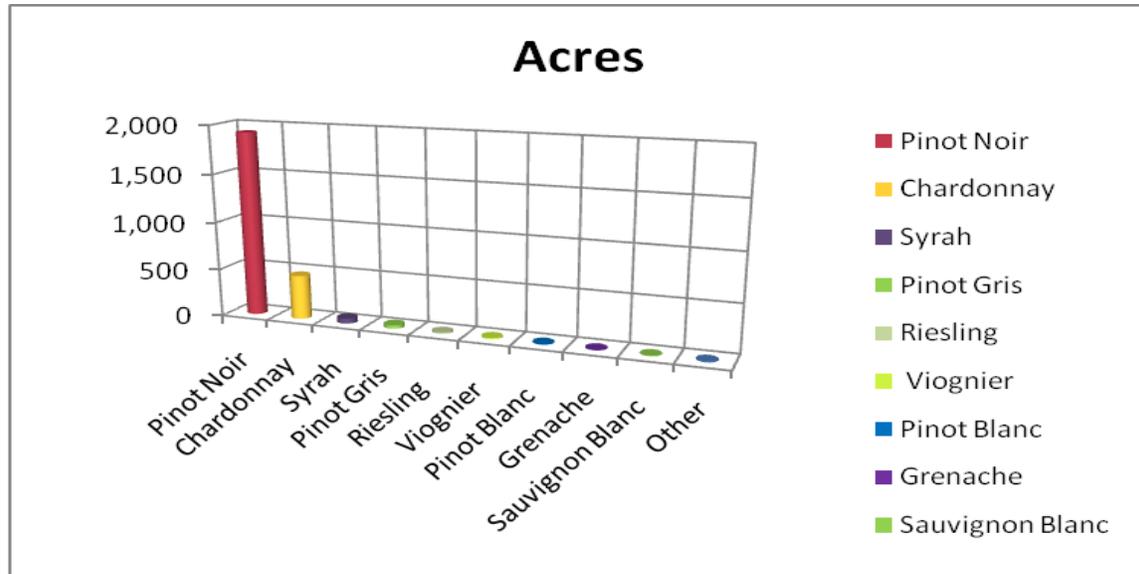
1997-Fourteen Vineyards planted totaling just over 500 acres

2010-Approximately 55 vineyards totaling 2,533 acres

2013- Approximately 60 vineyards totaling 2,877 acres

Planted Varieties

Best known for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay there are over 20 wine grape varieties planted in the Sta. Rita Hills



Pinot Noir 2,250 acres

Riesling 14 acres

Sauvignon Blanc 7 acres

Tempranillo 1.58 acres

Roussane .42 acre

Chardonnay 498 acres

Viognier 12.5 acre

Gruner Veltliner 2.06

Barbera 1.21

Albariño .35 acres

Syrah 53 acres

Pinot Blanc 9.6 acres

Gewürztraminer 1.87

Mission 1 acre

Marsanne .27 acres

Pinot Gris 35 acres

Grenache 8 acres

Dornfelder 1.75 acres

Dolcetto .93 acres

The AVA boundary is demarcated on the north by the Purisima Hills and on the south by the Santa Rosa Hills- it is these two east-west oriented ranges that frame the interior of the Sta. Rita Hills creating the only transverse valley on the west coast between Alaska and Chile. The close proximity to the Pacific Ocean allows coastal fog to fill the valley and hills with late night and early morning fog, intensifying the cool- climate influence on wine grape production.

